Vol. I. Numb. 10.

Athenian News:
OR,
Dunton's Oracle.

From **Tuesday** *April* the 4th, to **Saturday** *April* the 8th, 1710.

The Love-Poſt, *or a Pacquet from* Athens, *containing all the Billets Deux, tender Letters, Love Caſes, and merry Intrigues, that privately paſs'd between* Philaret *(a Member of the* Athenian *Society) and the moſt ingenious Ladies in the Queen's Dominions.—— To be continu'd (when there is Room for it) 'till the whole Pacquet is publiſh'd.*

BY your Leave Ladies! When Seriouſneſs takes not Effect perhaps Trifling may. It is ſaid of *Demoſthenes*, that being to deliver an Oration to the People in the Market-place, he had very few Auditors; whereupon he *whooping*, *whiſtling*, and *acting the Fool*, the People preſs'd in great Numbers to ſee him, when he rebuking their Folly, got them by this Device to ſtay and hear his eloquent Oration. 'Tis certain— *Mirth*, *Humour*, and *Love Toys*, are the greateſt Recommendation of a Weekly Paper. 'Tis notorious (ſays *Jack Pudding* *) "That Mr. *Bickerſtaff* is thought "dulleſt, where he argues with moſt ſtrenuous Senſe, "and where he expreſſes the ſtrongeſt Judgment; but "applauded for brighteſt in ſlighteſt Matters.—— The World will not love *grave Things*, "A *Tatler* (ſays *Malamoris*) "will fetch more Money than a Sermon. "Where "I have one Reader of a ſolid Argument, I have (ſaid Doggrel *Smith*) "Ten on a humorous Poem. Every Man hath ſome Toys, and I (God help me) a great many, one of which will now diſcover it ſelf in this *Love-Poſt*, for it carries *Amorous News*, and ſuch as will tickle the Fancy of moſt Readers, I can't ſay *all*, for all Men are not alike *gay* and *loving*, for— one of my Querifts likes none but my *graver Poſts*, and therefore promiſes to give away 500 of my *Dying Farewels* to *Honour*, *Riches*, *Pleaſure*— another tells me he'll be a great Promoter of my *Preaching-Poſt*, and is impatient for it;— a Third (as *Eaſter* is juſt at Hand) wants a *Sacramental-Poſt*, and will give away Two Thouſand to ſuch as never receiv'd the Sacrament.— A Fourth is hugely pleas'd that I promiſe 3000 diſtinct Poſts, and leaves the Subjects to my own Choice, but begs I wou'd never ſtuff 'em with *Love Stories*, or *Doggrel Rhimes*, (ſuch as he finds in the *Britiſh Apollo*) — and a Fifth (and the beſt Friend I have in the World) has ſent me a Letter with theſe Lines.——

Mr. Dunton, *I ſee nothing that looks like a Fault in the Poſts you have yet publiſh'd, but I am much afraid you will fall into ſome wanton Strains, to pleaſe this corrupt Age, for your greater Profit; which if you do, I'll forbid my Daughters to read 'em, and ſhall deſpiſe* Dunton's Oracle *as much as I do the* Britiſh Apollo.

Ladies, At this Rate how ſhou'd an Author pleaſe ye! One thinks him too grave, and another too light; one too ſad, and another too merry; however, having aſſur'd my *noble Friend* that I'll keep to as ſtrict Virtue in my *Love-Poſts* as I will in my graver Subjects, I hope that Promiſe will juſtify a little Mirth now and then, and the rather, as the ingenious *Malamoris* writes thus. *Mr.* Dunton, *I ſhou'd be glad to ſerve you, for I was extreamly pleas'd with your old* Athenian Oracle, *(and ſtill think it the moſt entertaining Project that ever was publiſh'd) and therefore tell you my Opinion, and that of thoſe I converſe with, as to your new* Oracle: *They think your Subjects too grave*— Dying *and* Farewels *is not proper to recommend a Paper, where* Mirth, Humour, *and* Fancy *was chiefly expected.*

If the Tafts of ingenious Perſons are thus various, I ſhall ſay with the *grave Juſtice*, *He that will have a May-pole ſhall have a May-pole, and he that won't may let it alone*, for I'll keep to Truth and Innocence in all my *Poſts*, and a Fig for Cenſure, for he that taxes me with too much *Levity*, I will (in the ſame Charge) find him guilty of being moroſe, for I perceive the graveſt of Men, when they wou'd perſwade us to follow their Dictates, at the ſame Time they grow cynical and peeviſh, and the TUB of a *Diogenes* is but the *Deriſion* of an *Alexander*.

Then, Ladies, ſhou'd you ſay my *Love-Poſts* are too light, I'd ſay no— you are too grave, nothing but hath ſomething of Lightneſs; the Soldier his *Feather*, the Prieſt his *Taſſel*, and the Citizen his *Wife*; and therefore I'll now ſet out (as a Lover ſhou'd) in a merry Pin; and ſeeing 'tis *Mirth*, *Humour*, and *Fancy*, that is to furniſh out this *Poſt*, I'll load *Parnaſſus* with a whole *Syſtem of Love*, both *Platonick* and *Natural*.

As my other *Poſts* ſet out loaded with— *Farewels*— *Mobs*— *Paradoxes*— *Sibils*— *Queſtions*, &c.— ſo this *rides* only for Love and Gallantry; and that no *Mirth*, or *Sport*, may be wanting, to pleaſe my facetious Readers, I ſhall in every *Poſt* charge the Ladies with innume-

* M. Smith, *the late Doggrel Author of the* Britiſh Apollo *is here meant.*

rable Faults and Follies— (ſhall prove, the whole Sex is made up of Vexation and Vanity, that they han't one Patch, or Maſk, or Ribon about 'em, nothing, from Top-knot to Shoe-tie, but what needs Correction) which they'll boldly defend; for as I treat each Subject with the utmoſt Freedom, ſo the *Ladies* (my Correſpondents) ſeem to be acted by a brave Spirit, and to be much above Diſguiſe and Fear; and as there is a matchleſs Tenderneſs in all the Letters, (eſpecially in thoſe writ by *Cleonta*) they can't fail of affecting the moſt inſenſible Hearts with pleaſing Agitations.

I ſhall only add, (by Way of Preface) that ſince this *Love-Poſt* is to be the humorous Part of my *Athenian News*, I think it beneath me to ſend to *Oxford* for Two Gentlemen to help me to play the Fool. No, Reader, (I bluſh to ſpeak it) my own Fancy was ever too pregnant and flowing with Subjects that were *light* and *trivial*; and for that Reaſon I ſhan't inſert one Line in this *Love-Poſt* but what is entirely of my own writing, or writ by thoſe ingenious Ladies with whom I correſponded during thoſe Ten Years I was concern'd in writing the *Athenian Mercury*; and ſeeing this *Love-Poſt* is to be a *univerſal Directory to all Lovers*, it ſhall comprehend all the Letters of *Love* and *Intrigue*, &c. which I formely publiſh'd, (and are now out of Print) which I'll mix with all thoſe *Billets Deux*, *tender Letters*, *Love Caſes*, and *merry Intrigues*, promis'd in this Paper.

But my *Love-Poſt* now blows his Horn, and therefore, leſt I ſhou'd tire the Ladies with too large a Preface, I'll now open his *Pacquet*; and the firſt Letter I'll divert 'em with is, a Letter directed to *Philaret*, which never yet ſaw the Light, having been confin'd to my Cloſet 'till this *Saturday*.

Ariadne's *Letter to* Philaret, *deſiring a Correſpondence with him, (or ſome other Member of the* Athenian *Society)*—— *promiſes to divert him with all thoſe* Billets Deux, tender Letters, Love Caſes, *and* merry Intrigues, *that ſhe has writ her ſelf and been privy to*— *She gives a very pleaſant Deſcription of the Perſon and Courtſhip of* Damon, *an accompliſh'd Beau, and concludes her Letter with telling her Dream of* Philaret *and Intrigue with* Mutius.

PHILARET,

UNderſtanding you was the *firſt Projector* and *Author* of the *Athenian Mercury*, (or *Queſtion-Project*) I am very deſirous to have a *tender* Correſpondence with you, (or ſome other Member of the *Athenian* Society) but don't miſtake me, *Philaret*, for by *tender* I don't mean any thing that's *ſenſual*, but only that near and affectionate Intimacy as will conſiſt with the pureſt Friendſhip, and is wholly *Platonick*; and therefore I ſhall make no Apology (tho' a Woman) for being the firſt that began the Correſpondence, for you don't know me, nor never ſhall, but who knows but that ſpiritual Correſpondence I deſire with you, may ſerve to ſweeten your graver Studies; (for why ſhou'd not you *Athenians* be now and then as merry as your Female Querists?) at leaſt, I ſhall endeavour to make you ſo, by ſending to you all thoſe— *Billets Deux*— *tender Letters*— *Love Caſes*— and *merry Intrigues*— that I have either writ my ſelf, or been privy to.—— *Philaret*, I hope the *Athenian* Society (but more eſpecially your ſelf) won't diſlike ſuch a Correſpondence as this, for as you are a marry'd Man you need not fear my loving your Body, and as I ſhall write to you *incognito*, none can cenſure our innocent Correſpondence. I call it ſo, as *Beaſts* and *Plants* move to propagate their like: Our *Love* ſhall then ſtep higher, and contend, (by a Marriage of Souls) to make our ſelves immortal. I aſſure you, Sir, as much as I love and eſteem you for your *Queſtion-Project*, my Love to *Philaret* is a *Tenderneſs* abſtracted from all corporeal groſs Impreſſions and ſenſual Appetite, and conſiſts in *Contemplation*, and *Ideas of the Mind*. I never yet plac'd my Happineſs where the dull Plowman, or every Brute cou'd find it out. *Shall Souls refin'd not know how to preſerve alive a noble Flame, but let it die, burn out to Appetite?* — No, *Philaret*, aſſure your ſelf, *I love your Soul, and nothing but your Soul*, and will ſtill love on with all the Liberty Philoſophy allows: Neither Diſtance of Place, nor Interval of Time, (nor even my being unknown to you) ſhall ever abate this *ſpiritual Tenderneſs* to your immortal Part, that took Root and Date from the firſt *Athenian Mercury* you ever writ.— And ſo much for this Time of *ſpiritual Love*.

I'm now come to a more ſenſual Adventure, (for I promis'd before to divert you with *Love Caſes*, and *merry Intrigues*, &c.) and becauſe I'm induc'd by ſeveral Reaſons to conceal the Names of the *Nymph* and *Shepherd*, I'll veil 'em under the borrow'd Titles of *Damon* and *Chloe*.— For *Damon*, all the World (but *Chloe*, who is blind to all but———) thinks him charming: They ſay he's extreamly well ſhap'd, and very tall, and has pretty wanton Eyes into the Bargain, a careleſs, haughty Air, and as ill natur'd as a Wit, is neither fond, nor obſequious to the Ladies, and can threaten to kick his Boy very gracefully: Yet, without flattering him, they ſay he has a great deal of Bravery and Courage; and to ſum up all his Qualification, he's an *accompliſh'd Beau*. But for all this, he's not to come in Competion with the foremoſt Man on Earth, nor excellent enough to rival——— whom *Chloe* loves with all the Paſſion that a Woman can, nor is it poſſible for any thing but Death, to extinguiſh a Flame that has taken ſuch a deep Root. But, ah, in vain! for the cruel Charmer has forgot, forgot that he indulg'd the ambitious Spark, that without Hopes, had long e'er this, voluntarily expir'd.— But this is not all that renders her Circumſtances intricate, for her Mother, and all her Friends, for ſeveral politick Reaſons that they really think tends to her Advantage, continually ſolicit her to marry.— But what do they talk of Intereſt to ſuch ſtark ſtaring Lovers! They'd perſwade her too, that *Damon* condeſcends in his Propoſal, but *Chloe* thinks the contrary, for her Soul's much above the Level that they imagine, and poſſeſs'd with a ſublimer Paſſion, looks down with Contempt on *Damon* and all his Services.— But after all, I muſt needs ſay, ſhe acts as if ſhe lik'd his Company, and patiently enough fools away the Time with him, from Eleven in the Morning

ing 'till Ten at Night, and yet would be upon the Negative Strain if ſhe was put to it, tho' every Smile and Bluſh proteſted the Contrary. But I don't like this runing the Riſque of Matrimony upon *meer Corporeal Love*, for that's all the Lady aſſures me, if it is ſo much: And now upon the whole, your Advice is deſir'd, for Things hang all in Suſpence, and will, 'till your Anſwer is receiv'd; pray be ſecret.— I have obſerv'd no Method in my Relation, but juſt told what came firſt to my Pen; if it's intelligible I have my End.

I dreamt laſt Night I ſaw you in a large pleaſant Garden, and told you that you as exactly anſwer'd the *Idea* I had of you in my Thoughts, as if you had been made after it, and you told me my Shoe was unty'd, and that I trod the Ribbon under my Feet.

I ſhall only add, If you han't writ to *Mutius*, let it alone now, or tell him nothing; but if he meets a Lady in Mourning with a ſuſpicious Smile and Bluſh on her Cheeks, and a Locket of Gold and Hair ty'd with Willow on her Hand, and a Locket of Diamonds in her Boſom, which is the Mark I was order'd to give, then, then; well, what then? ——

Pray, *Philaret*, ſend me Word who is the *Athenian* Poet.— I can't ſtay any longer, I proteſt, and ſo, Half my Soul, farewel, 'till you hear again from

ARIADNE.

Philaret's *Anſwer to* Ariadne, *wherein he diſcourſes of* Platonick *Friendſhip, (or the Marriage of Souls)* —— *holds Communication with the Spirit of his She Friend,* —— *banters* Damon's *ridiculous Courtſhip,* —— *proves ſenſual Love is a Malady compos'd of all Evils, and concludes his Letter with pleading Marriage as an Excuſe for his Dulneſs.*

ARIADNE,

I Receiv'd your ingenious Letter, deſiring a Correſpondence with *Philaret*, but I'm a *Witch* if I know who *Ariadne* is, neither have I in all my Life ſo much as heard her nam'd, yet methinks, Madam, I exactly know you, tho' I never ſaw your Face, and am ready to leave my Body behind to ſearch you out, to have purer Communication with your Spirit, and to mingle together our Souls, for that (as I take it) is what you call *the Marriage of Souls:* So that you ſee, Madam, I have as little to ſay to your Body as you have to mine. 'Tis true, without having ſeen your Face, I believe it handſom, and your Wit ſeems to me as charming as your Face. I imagine in you I know not what, which makes me paſſionately love I know not who; and yet, Madam, I'm very ſure my *Athenian* Brethren (who are no Strangers to Love) can't diſlike our Correſpondence, for as you are to me a *Venus*, and ſtrike a warm Flame in me, ſo you are a *Diana* too, and do infuſe a chaſt, religious Coldneſs; you do not only ſtand before me ſafe, as in a *Circle* made by your own Charms, but do *encircle* me with the ſame virtuous Spells. In a Word, you have led me into a *pleaſing Labyrinth*, (for you ſay I don't know you, nor never ſhall) but no Matter, for 'tis my Honour and Happineſs to be loſt in ſuch Company; or ſhou'd we meet (knowingly) we'll knit two Hearts in one, and part one Life in two, and ſo depart you for *B*———, and I for *Athens*. There is nothing that belongs to us both that can be divided. In Friendſhip two Souls ſo become one, as they both become two; our Wills make but one Mind, which ruling all our Actions, that it ſeems we are in like Manner but one Body.—— This is not the Thouſandth Part of what, with a great deal of Truth, I cou'd ſay of *Platonick Love*; but here's enough to ſhew you, that tho' your Friendſhip is the moſt tender Thing I poſſeſs, yet that I bear the Lawrel in Friendſhip, and out-love you as far as you out-love others; and ſo much may ſerve at preſent for an Anſwer to that Taſt you gave me of *ſpiritual Love.*

I ſhall now come to the more ſenſual Adventure, (*Damon's* Courtſhip) and here I ſhall firſt obſerve, that *ſenſual Love* is the moſt fatal of all Paſſions, 'tis not a *ſimple Malady*, but one compos'd of all Evils in the World, or at leaſt *Chloe* might expect ſofter Courtſhips than what I can yet find in the haughty Air of *Damon*; and to ſpeak Truth, were I a Woman, I ſhou'd not like *State-Love*, or to be woo'd by an Ambaſſador. *Love muſt be voluntary, or 'tis Intereſt, and not Love*, but we'll allow *Damon* to be all that a Lady can fancy, we'll ſuppoſe him *well ſhap'd, tall, witty, brave, amorous, wealthy*, and all that, yet ſenſual Love's a falſe Glaſs, which ſtill ſhews Things fairer than they are: But ſuppoſe *Damon* to his Wealth did add a ſincere Affection, yet did he wear a Crown, I can't ſee how he condeſcends in his Propoſals; wherein I wonder! What, to be the happieſt Man alive! for if he exceeds *Chloe* in *Gold*, ſhe exceeds him in *Wit*, to which nought can be a Match but her own.

I ſhou'd next proceed to ſome Remarks on your Intrigue with *Mutius* and dreaming of *Philaret*, but I ſhou'd be too tedious ſhou'd I enter on this Subject, for you dreamt one Night of *Philaret*, but he every Night of *Ariadne*, and when in my Dream I go to approach you, methinks your Eyes and your Tongue (Rivals in Kindneſs) ſpeak me Speechleſs.

Sudden Joys, like Griefs, confound at firſt!

But, Madam, to leave Fooling, I have been very ſick of late, and tho' but juſt turn'd of Thirty, fancy I'm growing old apace, ſo that now the Pleaſures of Life are leſs reliſhing and empty than heretofore; but ſtill I wiſh I cou'd have a View into the Times to come, and ſee whether amongſt thoſe Days there is that happy one that will preſent you to my View: The Sight of that wou'd ſweeten the intervening Time. If all this won't excuſe the Dulneſs of this Letter, what think ye if I ſhou'd plead Marriage; why I tell ye, Madam, 'tis ſo ſtrangely altering, that by Men's becoming one with their Wives, they are ſtrangely monſtrous, with Four Hands, and Legs, and Two Heads, and ſpend ſo much Time in loving their Wives, that they grow dull and fooliſh, and are ſcarce civil to others.

I have 1000000000000 other Things to ſay, but am faſt aſleep as ſoon as I have ſubſcrib'd my ſelf

(Dear *ARIADNE*)

Yours to command, whilſt

PHILARET.

Reader,

Reader, I have firſt entertain'd you with a Love Intrigue writ by that ingenious Lady (the unkown) *Ariadne*; I ſhall next preſent you with a ſurprizing Adventure that once befell me, with a lewd Woman. 'Twas a *Billet Deux* ſent me by a Citizen's Wife in *Dublin*, (as I judge by a Paſſage in it) both enticing and threatning me to her wanton Embraces.——— The Billet was directed thus,

To Philaret, *at the* Auction-houſe, *at* Dick's *Coffee-houſe, in* Skinner-row,

[*And is as follows*; viz.]

SUre, *Philaret*, you are not always guilty of Diſreſpect to your Friends! Can't you be more punctual to an Aſſignation? I can aſſure you, I was punctual both to *Place* and *Time*, and waited more than Two Hours in Hopes of your happy Arrival; but when I found my Expectations fruſtrated, and my ſelf only banter'd and abus'd, and forc'd to retreat without ſo much as the bare Aſpect of what I ſo long'd for, none but one in my Circumſtance is able to imagine the various Paſſions that mov'd me: *Fear*, *Hope*, *Love*, *Revenge*, all acted their ſeveral Parts, and ſo paſs'd off the Stage; only *Love* remain'd to plead Excuſes for you. Some of them ſo frivolous, that I am aſham'd to mention them, only to tell you, (that ſenſeleſs as they were) they had Power enough to prevail with one willing to believe (tho' againſt Senſe or Reaſon) any thing that pleads in *Philaret*'s Favour: Home I went, where I attend your Anſwer, and am longing with Impatience, 'till I ſee what Excuſes the falſe *Philaret* can frame for himſelf, for ſo the preſent Paſſion ſtiles him; tho' that Sentiment too was over before I had finiſh'd the Sentence, and I could almoſt find in my Heart to burn my Letter, but that I ſhould not have Time to write another before the watchful *Argus* would inſpect into my Privacies: Then I was about to blot it out, only that I fear'd would ſpoil the Phiz of my Billet; ſo I reſolv'd to let it ſtand as a Mark of my Courage, that I dare at ſometimes adventure to think *Philaret* falſe; yea, and that I was once bold enough to let you know it.——— Well, *Philaret*, I ſhall one Day be even with you, and it may be, you may repent when it may be too late to retrieve the ſlight Value you have had for the moſt ſincere and cordial Friendſhip laid at your Feet, by

Sept. 2. 1698. Your ever faithful

DORINDA.

POSTSCRIPT.

Direct your Anſwer to me, to be left at that which was St. Lawrence's *Coffee houſe, on* Cork-hill, *under the borrow'd Name of Captain* John Seamore, *and I will order it to be call'd for by one that will ſafely deliver it to,*

Your own (Dorinda) *if you pleaſe.*

Philaret's *Anſwer to the Citizen's Wife.*

Sept. 5. 1698. I receiv'd a Letter ſubſcrib'd *Dorinda*, but am wholly a Stranger both to your Perſon and Meaning.— Your Two Hours— your Time and Place— are *Arabick* to me, who approve of no Aſſignations but what are juſt; and therefore 'tis very certain your Letter was wrong directed, and ſhou'd have gone to ſome of your lewd Companions, who in your Drink, (for there are ſuch Monſters as drunken Women) or by the Likeneſs of Garb, you miſtook for me;— or perhaps you're ſome *Suburb Impudence*, who wou'd abuſe an honeſt Man in Hopes of getting a Penny to conceal your Slanders. If this is your Deſign (as I'm told 'tis uſual with common Strumpets) you are as much miſtaken in my Humour, as you are in my Perſon, and therefore go about your Buſineſs, for 'till you're virtuous I can't love you, and 'tis not in my Nature to fear any thing. But you ſay, *you'll be even with me, if I fly your lewd Embraces, and that (if I don't meet you) I ſhall repent when 'twill be too late, the ſlight Value I have for you*; but I thank God, my Virtue is Proof againſt all your Charms, and my Innocence ſuch, as I challenge you to do your worſt.

As to your Care in concealing your Lewdneſs, (for you ſay you're afraid of your watchful *Argus*) it no ways obliges me; I ſhou'd more rejoyce to hear that ſuch a Wanton (as your Billet ſhews you to be) had broke the Devil's Fetters, and was kneeling to her Huſband for Pardon.

If you think of Amendment, fling your ſelf at your Huſband's Feet; *Tears in your Eyes may carry the Cauſe, where a Husband is Judge.* Without this, you do but diſſemble with God and Man, neither can *Argus* think you repent, 'till you diſcover your lewd Haunts, and the Names of thoſe that have defil'd his Bed. As this will prove your Sincerity, ſo 'twill make *Argus* forget your former Lewdneſs, and if he's a generous Huſband, never to mention 'em more. And *Argus*, if ſhe thus repents, prithee receive her again— for *what knoweſt thou, O Husband, whether thou ſhalt ſave thy Wife?* 1 Cor. 7. 16. Neither are theſe ungrateful Reflections, (my own *Dorinda*, as you call your ſelf) for there is no Faith in Sin, and I ought to ſlight a Friendſhip which can't be true, and wou'd end in the Ruin of Soul and Body.——— I have only to add, that I wiſh you chaſt, and better Eyes for the future, and then *Argus* and you will fall a loving again; and remember at parting, 'tis your Penitence, and nothing elſe, can ſet you right in the Opinion of,

PHILARET.

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